

Buckden Parish Council

Risk Management

April 2022 to March 2023



Risk Rating 1-11 Low 12-15 Medium 16-25 High						
Risk no	Description (The risk is that...)	Impact (The impact on the authority would be)	Likelihood score (1-5)	Impact score (1-5)	Risk rating (H,M,L)	Response (What actions have been taken) Additions/amendments suggested September 2021 as track-changes to be considered by Council
Finance and Budget Risks managed by Finance Group (Financial Risks – F)						
F1	Residents are concerned about increase in Parish Council Precept for 2022/23	Reputational damage, residents concerned about rationale for change of finances	1	3	L	Rationale for rise in precept put in Roundabout to include details of Parish Council work over last 12 months and information on grants received to offset costs as well as additional responsibilities delegated to BPC from HDC and CCC. Chair, Chair of Finance Advisory Group (FAG) or Clerk as Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) to respond to residents' concerns.
F2	Grants or donations availability to be made more widely known	There may be uncertainty within local organisations	3	3	L	Grants & donations policy approved on 9 July 2019 Minute Number (2019-20)-317 reviewed. Operational arrangements for 2022-23 may need to be flexible to accommodate unexpected cost pressures on activities and financial commitments.
F3	Council fails to ensure Finance Regulations are current and updated	PC not legally compliant	1	4	L	Finance regulations regularly reviewed. Chair of Finance group, Clerk as RFO and Chairs on FAG to agree any necessary revisions at April FAG, for May Council meeting
F4	Failure to ensure the adequacy of the Annual Precept and sound budgeting arrangements to provide for the necessary expenditure	Reputational damage and inability to discharge PC responsibilities	1	5	L	Annual budget prepared by RFO and Finance Advisory Group and debated and approved in Council as the basis for the Precept. Statements of receipts and payments to be prepared at the end of each quarter and provided to the Council. Chair of Finance Advisory Group has clear view of budget, and the budget setting involves all Committees and Advisory Group chairs; contingency funds put in place. Finance Advisory Group meets regularly and monitors expenditure and forecast. Further training needs identified for Councillors. Finance lead provides 1-2-1 training for new Councillors

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F5	Council sued or surcharged because of improper or illegal use funds and/or failing to keep financial records in accordance with statutory requirements	Reputational damage and inability to discharge PC responsibilities	1	5	L	All expenditure itemised for review by Councillors in PC meeting and through bank account reconciliation and monitored by Clerk. Clerk/RFO is qualified & has updated training by CAPALC and Edge IT and refers to them for guidance as necessary. Expenditure permitted by S137 of LGA1972 is listed separately Investment Strategy to be reviewed annually in April by FAG.
F6	Loss of Council funds though theft or dishonesty	Reputational damage and inability to discharge PC responsibilities	1	5	L	Financial systems controlled under Financial Regulations that are reviewed annually by Council and administered by Clerk as RFO. Quarterly reconciliation by Councillor independent of RFO and Finance AG Fidelity guarantee - assessed annually. This will be reviewed regularly by RFO to ensure it is in line with increased income.
F7	Extra expenditure incurred through unnecessary deterioration due to neglect of physical assets owned by council	Reputational damage Injuries to residents	1	5	L	Playground equipment to have annual safety inspection by specialists Regular and responsible maintenance of assets to be carried out whenever inspection reveals it is necessary Street lighting maintenance regularly carried out by contractors Respond to any resident sightings of damage. General Purposes & Cemetery AG to review annually all assets, their location and their ongoing maintenance and safety.

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F8	Extra expenditure incurred through delegation of accountability for services previously funded by other local authorities	Reputational damage and inability to discharge PC responsibilities	5	3	M	RFO to raise such issues with Council Chairman and Finance AG lead within 4 weeks of the un-anticipated expenditure being identified. Ensure Parish Council General Reserves are maintained at recommended levels in relation to Precept. Ensure appropriate contingency funds in Earmarked Reserves to protect priority service delivery Council to be advised of externally-driven cost pressures through Finance Reports. Ensure effective communication to residents in relation to accountability and any changes e.g. between Councils
F9	Budget exceeded by failure to identify other unexpected cost pressures	Reputational damage and inability to discharge PC responsibilities	3	3	L	Ensure mechanisms in place to report unplanned-for expenditure in-year and document risk assessments when significant cost pressures are identified. Prioritise important and urgent for consideration by Council within overall budget
F10	Budget pressure through inadequate insurance cover	Reputational damage and inability to discharge PC responsibilities	1	4	L	Ensure Asset Register updated, and level of insurance cover reviewed whenever Council makes a purchase. Review Council Assets Register yearly. Maintain accurate information on type, numbers and locations
F11	Critical omissions from Financial Risk Management Procedures	Reputational damage and inability to discharge PC responsibilities	1	4	L	RFO and Chair of Finance group to review annually, as per BPC annual plan. Wages payments reviewed monthly by Staffing AG Review of spending limits in Finance Regulations Other PFS reviewed monthly by Chair of Finance AG prior to review and authorisation at full Council meeting

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Risk Management
 April 2022 to March 2023



						Sufficient Councillors to be available to efficiently manage on-line bank payments in a timely manner
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F12	Failure to account in budget plan for nationally-decided staff pay uplifts	Payments to staff would exceed budget	4	3	M	All BPC employees are on LGA national pay scales RFO to seek advice in October each year, as part of budget-setting, from payroll providers and CAPALC on any known changes; review after November National budget e.g. effect if any of changes in national minimum/living wage Pay negotiations may be settled very late in the year, affecting both current and following year actual costs; estimated impact used in budget setting to try to mitigate this externally managed cost pressure
F13	Failure to spend CIL payments from HDC in accordance with legislative requirements and within the powers of BPC	Principal Authority requires BPC to return CIL funds spent in contravention of statutory requirements	3	5	M	RFO to ensure that Councillors are made aware of national rules and requirements for spending and reporting on use of CIL. CIL expenditure priorities to be agreed by full Council in line with NP and CAP and after consultation with Parish residents Deliverability of identified priorities to be assessed using agreed matrix including need for cooperation with, and potential CIL funds transfer to, an authority/Council with appropriate 'powers' if CIL priorities cannot be delivered directly by BPC

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Legal risks managed by Compliance Advisory Group and Staffing Advisory Group (Legal risks L)						
L1	Council fails to ensure Standing Orders are current and updated	PC not legally compliant	3	4	M	Standing Orders revised fully in 2018 and delegated authority given to Clerk to incorporate updates. New Auditor appointed 2019 and due for review 2022. Additional Audit including review of Policies and Procedures to work towards Local Council Award. . Standing Orders reviewed in detail in July 2021 and necessary revisions taken to Council September 2021 for discussion and agreement. Approved amendments made and on website. Minute Number: 09-083. Clerk and Chair to note and implement any changes required through revision of regulations e.g. in relation to Covid or UK leaving the EU and included in NALC template S/O
L2	Failure to meet requirements under: - Employment Law - HMRC tax/NI regulations - VAT regulations	PC is non-compliant Reputational damage	3	5	M	All employees to have written contracts of employment; contracts reviewed and updated July 2021 Staffing AG Statutory requirements for employer's NI and pension contributions to be monitored and met. IR return made annually. Check receipt of P60s annually in May. VAT return made quarterly if required (April, July, Oct, Jan). Internal and External audit of accounts to be carried out annually

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L3	Failure to provide the required proper, timely and accurate reporting of Council business in the Minutes of the meetings	PC is non-compliant Reputational damage	1	4	L	Council minutes to be prepared by Clerk and, after being checked for correctness and approved by Councillors at a subsequent ordinary meeting they are to be signed by the Chairman and published on website within one month, all associated non-confidential papers attached with Agenda. See L1 above for statutory powers re-signing minutes in specific circumstances
L4	Failure to ensure proper document provision and control including loss of documents	PC is non-compliant Reputational damage	2	4	L	Signed minutes of meetings to be continuously page numbered and retained within parish by Clerk for a period advised by CAPALC. Document retention policy adopted. Discussion and decision required on safe keeping of hard copies. Cloud back-up used for all current documentation from July 2019 Meeting agendas and minutes are added to PC website and back-up maintained by website provider. Confirmed Sep2021 Duplicate copies of signed Minutes to be held securely. e.g. scanned to the Cloud with appropriate and defined back-up arrangements. Archives stored in County Records Office, taking account of GDPR requirements and 'right to erasure' under data protection legislation Advice from CAPALC Governance Audit that only current minute book to be retained in the Office. Previous minutes to be archived by Clerk after year-end; each Council year to be archived in County Archives separately in May each year.

Buckden Parish Council

Risk Management

April 2022 to March 2023



						Historic document storage to be investigated and rationalised.
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L5	Failure to meet the requirements of best practice for a Parish Council to ensure the confidence and trust of the electorate	Inability to improve and develop using the framework of the Local Council Award Scheme Reputational Damage	3	3	L	Parish Council accounts subject to both internal and external annual audit A minimum of 10 ordinary meetings are held each year. Agenda to be published on notice boards and website. Minutes available on website Monthly news page published in the Parish magazine, delivered to every house in the village and on line and put on website. Chairman to present a report of the Council's activities to the Annual Parish Meeting (Assembly) Elections held when required under the direction of the HDC Returning Officer. If elections are not required, after consultation with HDC, the documented process for co-opting to be complied with.
L6	Failure to meet the laid-down timetable when responding to Consultations	PC is non-compliant Reputational damage	1	5	L	Clerk to ensure that the Council does not miss deadlines.
L7	Failure to respond to Electors wishing to exercise their rights of inspection	PC is not legally compliant Reputational damage	1	3	L	Council to comply with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and UK Data Protection Act and Regulations. Clerk ensures that all Minutes/Agendas and any required financial audit papers are available on website with the exclusion of personal data Clerk to provide facility for Electors to inspect all of the Council's Public documents by request

Buckden Parish Council
Risk Management
 April 2022 to March 2023



						To advertise statutory period of inspection of accounts.
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L8	Failure to meet the requirements of the Principal Authority's Code of Conduct and Nolan Principles	Inability to improve and develop using the framework of the Local Council Award Scheme Reputational Damage	3	2	L	Register of Councillors Interests, gifts and hospitality to be kept by Clerk and copied to HDC Monitoring Officer Hunts DC Code of Conduct formally adopted, and observation of practice recorded at each meeting. Chair of Finance Group to remind all councillors of all DPI obligations. All new Councillors to sign Declaration of Acceptance of Office which requires Councillors to undertake to observe the Code of Conduct and complete Register of 'Members Interests. Code of Conduct to be reviewed yearly and all councillors to check their returns. Dispensation policy and process in place. All Councillors to be advised that training on Code of Conduct is essential, with updating no less often than when Code is changed. This training to be added to Councillor' records by Clerk. To explore option to provide bespoke training for Buckden PC Councillors with potential to invite members of other Parish Councils.

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Data Risks managed by Communications Advisory Group (Data Risks – D)						
D1	PC does not put in place policies and procedures to ensure they are compliant with the Data Protection legislation UK GDPR	PC is not legally compliant Reputational damage	3	5	M	PC approved recommended GDPR documents. June 2020 Minute number (20-21) 06-11, D&C AG to maintain oversight Work towards compliance by August 2022 – Cyber Security Policy Work plan to be updated
D2	The PC does not fully understand cyber risks and does not put in place sufficient safeguards	PC is not legally compliant Reputational damage	3	5	M	Communications Advisory group together with Clerk are reviewing and putting in place key guidance relating to cyber risks Formalise Data and Cybersecurity policy Cyber risks insurance and RRADAR support through insurers
D3	Systems for approval of bank payments are secure and data compliant	PC is not legally compliant Reputational damage	2	5	L	Copies of PINS and Passwords to be held in hard copy by Chairman. Sealed details – tamper evident.

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Reputational Risks managed by Full Council, Communications AG and Compliance AG (Reputational Risks – R)						
R1	Relationships with local organisations are damaged through lack of or inaccurate communication	Reputational damage	2	4	L	All key organisations are listed, and lead contacts identified. Relevant communication agreed Communication is standing agenda item on BPC Agenda Formal meetings with organisations held if required
R2	Residents are concerned that they are not being fully kept informed	Reputational damage	2	4	L	Respond in a timely and considered way to all communication Media policy Approved Jun 2020 to be reviewed every 2 years Approve at the Annual Parish Council Meeting in May every other year – due May 2022 Lead Parish Councillors to be identified and Media training given Communications AG change in name and Terms of Reference to highlight focus on communication
R3	Use of social media and digital communication to promote or share PC business leads to info being shared inappropriately	PC is not legally compliant Reputational damage	3	5	M	Clear guidelines given to Councillors on posting and responding to digital communication in line with the Code of Conduct. Add to guide for mentors to address with new Councillors Media policy approved on 11 Feb 2020 and will be reviewed at least once every 2 years. Agreed to review Jun 2022. New Facebook account begun January/February 2022. Comms AG to monitor
R4	The criteria and process for allocation of CIL money is not transparent, leading to residents' loss of trust and confidence in Parish Council	Reputational damage	2	5	L	Full Council agree process and criteria and involve residents in further identifying and prioritising CIL projects. Criteria for allocation of CIL projects and Deliverability Grid agreed by BPC and in place by September 2020. Consultation undertaken 2021 Timed & Costed Operational Plan to include CIL-funded items

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						Silver Street outline application approved by Hunts District Council. Review effect on CIL and also of S106.
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R5	Residents are concerned about BPC response to local events	Reputational damage	3	5	M	Councillors maintain awareness of resident's concerns and put in place emergency procedures. (See Business Continuity risks) Put in place Emergency Response Plan. Links and communications re CCC Flood group developing Emergency Response Plan drafted. Need to nominate a Councillor to take this forward

Health and Safety and Safeguarding Risks managed by Clerk, Staffing AG and General Purposes & Cemetery AG (Health and Safety Risks – HS&S)						
HS&S 1	Liability for injury or disease to Council employee(s) arising from their employment	PC is not legally compliant Reputational damage	3	5	M	Risk assessments in place for hazardous activities – link to tools that employees are permitted to use. Ensure Employer's Liability Insurance cover of £10,000,000 is maintained Recorded training for job role. Risk Assessments for employees' hazardous activities to in place. Note: Contractors required to provide RAMS as part of contract Formal accident book in place and entries monitored at least quarterly by Staffing AG Include in Annual Plan Follow national guidance on working practices when available

Buckden Parish Council
Risk Management
 April 2022 to March 2023



						Staff sign annually to say they have read and agree to comply with H&S policies and RAMS and inform line manager of need for any changes e.g. in response to change of circumstances of work. Records of this to be kept in personnel files
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HS&S 2	Failure to ensure all employees meet their responsibilities for Health and Safety and contractors have qualifications required for effective and sufficient public liability insurance cover and safety arrangements	PC is not legally compliant Reputational damage	3	5	M	Employees advised of their own responsibilities under the Health & Safety at Work Act for the safety of themselves, their colleagues and the public, including safe working practices and use of appropriate PPE where that is deemed the appropriate method to mitigate residual risks Note: Clerk requires all contractors to show Public Liability insurance and provide Risk Assessments and Method Statements (RAMS) before contracts for work are agreed If there is a lack of compliance in any aspect of work Clerk to write to contractor and ensure corrective action is taken. In case of serious breach, contact Statutory Authority.
HS&S 3	Legal liability arising from damage to third party property or death/injury to individuals as a consequence of the council's asset ownership or provision of amenities including BPC-managed MVAS units	Financial loss Injury to residents	3	5	M	Public liability indemnity of £10,000,000 to be maintained including for equipment held/operated under an agreement e.g. with CCC. Annual safety inspection of playground equipment by a member of Register of Play Inspectors International (RPII) and any recommendations implemented. Regular and responsible maintenance of assets to be carried out. Playground equipment visually inspected weekly, and recorded Tree Survey frequency and process for annual checks revised to respond to recent case law. All details contained in Tree Strategy approved by Council September 2020 amended on 9 Feb 21 Minute 02-175 – to reflect guidance from HDC Arboricultural Officer. Cemetery Stability Testing to be carried out and recorded.

Buckden Parish Council
Risk Management
 April 2022 to March 2023



						Pavement and road condition survey carried out annually problems reported to accountable organisation (CCC). Footpath condition survey carried out annually and problems reported to accountable organisation (CCC).
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HS&S 4	Damage to physical assets owned by the Council such as: - Street furniture - Playground equipment - MVAS UNITS - Defibrillator	Financial loss Injury to residents	3	5	M	Ensure all assets are covered by insurance for damage Lighting Earmarked Reserve available to meet cost of streetlight replacement in the event of unrecoverable replacement cost Defibrillator at Village Hall checked weekly, and location logged with Ambulance Service Street furniture asset problems reported to Clerk Playground equipment visually inspected to agreed schedule Moving asset records to Parish online system and copy to BPC financial records, backed up by the external contractors Look further at implications of use of MVAS units including maintenance and monitoring of condition e.g. batteries and messaging
HS&S 5	Safeguarding issues not dealt with appropriately	PC is not legally compliant Reputational damage	3	5	M	Safeguarding Policy in place Safeguarding training undertaken by Clerk and lead Councillors Mentoring and further support for Clerk as Designated Safeguarding Lead Awareness of National crime agency/CEOP online publications re on-line risks to young people and vulnerable adults Policy is in list of annually-signed documents

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Business Continuity Risks						
BC 1	Disruptive incidents or situations occur Residents seek guidance from PC without receiving help they want or need	Normal council business unable to continue and/or council response not seen to be effective Reputational damage Not legally complaint Financial loss	4	4	H	Follow national and local guidance Respond appropriately and constructively to residents' concerns Communications AG to monitor complaints & compliments from residents, identify trends and propose improvements to protect and support employees as well as managing BPC reputation.

Buckden Parish Council
Risk Management
 April 2022 to March 2023



Risk Summary

Version Control

Version	Date	Author	Reason for update
Version 1	16 Apr 2019	Clerk and Compliance AG	Reviewed
Version 2	10 Mar 20 (Minute (2019-20)269	Clerk and Compliance AG	Approved
Version 3	April 2020	Cllrs SA and CU	To update in particular in response to COVID19
Version 4	2 Sep 2020	Clerk and Cllrs CU, AHJ and SA	Reviewed and revised to reflect progress and new issues
Version 5	March 2021 Review Minute 04-217	Clerk and Cllrs CU, AHJ and SA	To update to reflect changing risk scores as new mitigation measures have been implemented, along with impact of changes to data protection following exit from EU
Version 5.1	September 2021 Review Minute 09-082	Clerk & Cllrs CU, AHJ and SA	To update and change information on additional mitigation measures
Version 5.2	March 2022 after Compliance AG review January 2022	Clerk & Cllrs CU, AHJ and SA	Revised for Council year 2022-23